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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Veterans, Homeland Security, Military Affairs, Small Business and Government Reform (SC-VHSMASBGR)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... CR
- Executive Sessions ... ES
- Public Hearings ... PH

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... Appt (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)

 (ab = Assembly Bill) (ar = Assembly Resolution)

(sb = Senate Bill) (sr = Senate Resolution)

(ajr = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(sjr = Senate Joint Resolution)

Miscellaneous ... Misc

* Contents organized for archiving by: Mike Barman (LRB) (August/2012)

Senate

Record of Committee Proceedings

Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security, Military Affairs, Small Business and Government Reform

Clearinghouse Rule 05-097

Relating to the assistance to needy veterans program. Submitted by Department of Veterans Affairs.

October 26, 2005

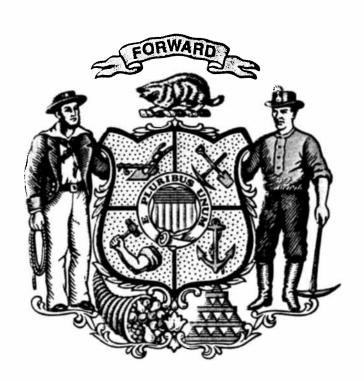
Referred to Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security, Military

Affairs, Small Business and Government Reform.

November 26, 2005 No action taken.

Daniel Lindstedt Committee Clerk

D.C. Watelt



LCRC FORM 2



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RULES CLEARINGHOUSE

Ronald Sklansky Clearinghouse Director Terry C. Anderson Legislative Council Director

Richard Sweet Clearinghouse Assistant Director Laura D. Rose
Legislative Council Deputy Director

CLEARINGHOUSE REPORT TO AGENCY

[THIS REPORT HAS BEEN PREPARED PURSUANT TO S. 227.15, STATS. THIS IS A REPORT ON A RULE AS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED BY THE AGENCY; THE REPORT MAY NOT REFLECT THE FINAL CONTENT OF THE RULE IN FINAL DRAFT FORM AS IT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE. THIS REPORT CONSTITUTES A REVIEW OF, BUT NOT APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF, THE SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT AND TECHNICAL ACCURACY OF THE RULE.]

CLEARINGHOUSE RULE 05-097

AN ORDER to repeal and recreate VA 2.01, relating to the assistance to needy veterans program.

Submitted by **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

09-16-2005 RECEIVED BY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

10-13-2005 REPORT SENT TO AGENCY.

RS:PS

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RULES CLEARINGHOUSE REPORT

reported as noted below: STATUTORY AUTHORITY [s. 227.15 (2) (a)] 1. NO 🗸 YES Comment Attached FORM, STYLE AND PLACEMENT IN ADMINISTRATIVE CODE [s. 227.15 (2) (c)] 2. YES ✓ NO Comment Attached 3. CONFLICT WITH OR DUPLICATION OF EXISTING RULES [s. 227.15 (2) (d)] NO V YES Comment Attached ADEQUACY OF REFERENCES TO RELATED STATUTES, RULES AND FORMS 4. [s. 227.15 (2) (e)] YES 🗸 Comment Attached CLARITY, GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION AND USE OF PLAIN LANGUAGE [s. 227.15 (2) (f)] 5. YES 🗸 NO Comment Attached POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH, AND COMPARABILITY TO, RELATED FEDERAL 6. REGULATIONS [s. 227.15 (2) (g)] NO 🗸 YES Comment Attached COMPLIANCE WITH PERMIT ACTION DEADLINE REQUIREMENTS [s. 227.15 (2) (h)] 7. YES NO V Comment Attached

This rule has been reviewed by the Rules Clearinghouse. Based on that review, comments are



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RULES CLEARINGHOUSE

Ronald Sklansky Clearinghouse Director Terry C. Anderson
Legislative Council Director

Richard Sweet
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Legislative Council Deputy Director

CLEARINGHOUSE RULE 05-097

Comments

[NOTE: All citations to "Manual" in the comments below are to the Administrative Rules Procedures Manual, prepared by the Revisor of Statutes Bureau and the Legislative Council Staff, dated January 2005.]

2. Form, Style and Placement in Administrative Code

- a. The analysis should provide a brief explanation of the changes being made by this rule to the former program of assistance to needy veterans.
- b. In s. VA 2.01 (1), the definitions should be placed in alphabetical order. [See s. 1.01 (7) (a), Manual.] Also, s. VA 2.01 (1) (intro.) should read simply: "In this section:".
- c. The subdivision numbers in s. VA 2.01 (2) (b) should appear without parentheses and should be followed by a period.
- d. In s. VA 2.01 (2) and (3), the paragraph titles should be shown in italics. Also, in sub. (2) (b), the subdivision titles should be placed within single quotation marks. [See s. 1.05 (2), Manual.]

4. Adequacy of References to Related Statutes, Rules and Forms

Section VA 2.01 makes reference to a number of forms. The requirements of s. 227.14 (3), Stats., should be met.

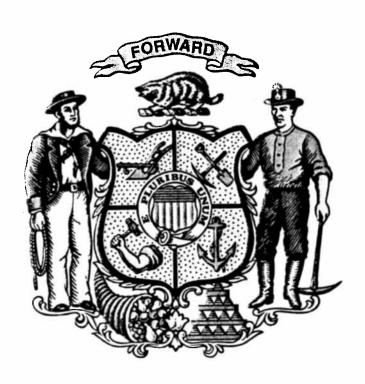
5. Clarity, Grammar, Punctuation and Use of Plain Language

- a. In the list of statutes interpreted, "sec." should read "s.".
- b. In the first paragraph of the analysis, "Wis" should read "Wisconsin."

- c. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (b), the "ss." should be changed to "s.".
- d. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (d), line 1, "saving" should be changed to "savings."
- e. Section VA 2.01 (1) (f) should be rewritten to read: "'Denture' means a dental device that replaces one or more teeth and includes all dental preparation and the manufacture and fitting of the device."
- f. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (g), line 1, it is suggested that "Department" be dropped from the defined term, to avoid confusion with the definition of "department," which is the state Department of Veterans Affairs. Also, is there a difference between "treatment programs" and "certified alcohol and other drug abuse treatment programs"? If not, the same terminology should be used for both to avoid confusion. Finally, the phrase "as determined by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services" is confusing. What is the department determining? Should it instead say "certified by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services"?
- g. The definition of "earned income" in s. VA 2.01 (1) (h) is not clear. Does it include the monthly take home earnings of all family members, as implied by the phrase "all payroll deductions of the applicant and the applicant's family"? Also, for readability, the phrase "and work study payments" should be moved up to follow "national guard pay." The entire definition should be reviewed and reworded.
- h. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (L), a comma should be inserted after the word "including." [See, also, sub. (1) (0).]
- i. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (m), an ophthalmologist (misspelled in rule) is a licensed physician and would not have to be listed separately.
- j. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (o), "had" should be changed to "has" and the last phrase should read "a fire, flood, tornado, blizzard, or earthquake."
- k. In s. VA 2.01 (1) (t), line 3, "(USDVA)" should be inserted after "Affairs." On line 5, what is meant by "definite" awards? The entire definition is confusing and should be rewritten to group together and clarify what is, and is not, included in unearned income.
- 1. In s. VA 2.01 (2) (a), the "must" on lines 4, 5, and 7 should be changed to "shall." The comma on line 6 should be deleted. On line 7, the end of the last full sentence should read "the federal or state government." The next sentence should start with: "If requested by the department, the applicant shall submit...." The "will" on lines 9 and 10 should be changed to "shall." On line 10, "that the" should be changed to "if any."
- m. In s. VA 2.01 (2) (b) 1., line 1, "subsection" should be changed to "subd." A comma should be inserted after "office" on line 3. On lines 4 and 5, the sentence could be reworded to read: "An applicant may apply for subsistence aid, health care aid, or both." On line 5, what is an "authorized" application? On line 6, what is meant by having the maximum available aid "encumbered"? On lines 7 and 8, "will" should be changed to "shall." On line 9, "aid" should

be inserted after "subsistence." On lines 11 and 12, is there a difference between "the dollar amount available for each type of aid" and "the amount of aid being authorized"? On the last line, to whom does "provider" refer? The recipient's health care provider?

- n. In s. VA 2.01 (2) (b) 2., should the references be to unremarried *surviving* spouses? On line 3, use of "also" is confusing. What is that evidence in addition to?
- o. In s. VA 2.01 (2) (b) 3., were members of the Reserves intentionally, or inadvertently, excluded from the service members listed? To what does "also" refer on line 3? What is that information in addition to? On line 4, the phrase "a loss of income has occurred" should be moved to follow the first "that." Also, is it intended that the family show both that a loss or income and an economic emergency has occurred? The use of "and" on line 5 requires that both be shown. On line 5, to whom does "they" refer, the family members or the service member?
- p. In s. VA 2.01 (3) (a), line 1, "will" should be changed to "shall." The first two sentences should be rewritten in the active voice. On line 7, "date" should be inserted after "expiration." On line 8, for consistency, "benefits" should be capitalized. The last sentence states that a second application for health care could be submitted if the patient will not incur additional costs. Would additional costs be the reason for applying for more health care aid? This language needs clarification.
- q. In s. VA 2.01 (3) (b), subsistence aid should be granted if the person has a loss of income due to illness, injury (rather than "disability"), or natural disaster as provided in s. 45.40 (1), Stats., as affected by 2005 Wisconsin Act 25. The sentence beginning at the end of line 4 is too lengthy to be readily understood. On line 5, "will" should be changed to "shall." The sentence beginning at the end of line 9 and the following sentence should be rewritten in the active voice, to indicate who must take the actions. On line 16, the "was" could be changed to "is." The "must" on line 17 should be changed to "shall." On line 18, a hyphen should be inserted between "department" and "approved."
- r. In s. VA 2.01 (3) (c), the comma on line 2 should be replaced by "and." On line 4, the phrase "limited to" could be deleted and the second "to" could be deleted, as could the "to" on line 5. On line 6, "3rd" should be replaced by "third." In the last sentence, how can the department dictate what health care providers must accept as payment in full?



REPORT AND ANALYSIS OF CLEARINGHOUSE RULE 05-097

1. Statement explaining the basis and purpose for the proposed rules.

The basis and purpose of the proposed rules are to implement the legislative initiative creating a new veterans assistance to needy veterans program, as created in 2005 Wisconsin Act 25. The new program replaces the former economic assistance grant programs.

2. Summary of public comments made as a result of testimony presented at the public hearing and the agency's response to those comments.

The public hearing was conducted on October 21, 2005. Rick Gates, a county veterans service officer, asked several questions regarding implementation of the rule. The questions were answered satisfactorily. There was no objection to the promulgation of the rule.

3. Changes to the rule analysis or fiscal estimate.

None.

4. Public hearing appearances and registration.

As indicated in paragraph 2.

5. Response to Legislative Council Clearinghouse Report.

The recommendations of the Legislative Council Clearinghouse were implemented in the final order approved by the Board.

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

JOHN A. SCOCOS, SECRETARY

					2005 Session
	ORIGINAL	. 0	UPDATED	1	RB or Bill No./Adm. Rule No. A 2.01
FISCAL ESTIMATE DOA-2048 N(R10/94)	☐ CORRECT	ED 🗆	SUPPLEMENTAL	. Arr	nendment No. if Applicable
Subject Adopting emergency rules to repeal and recreate Chapter VA 2 of the Wisconsin Administration Code relating to the assistance to needy veterans program.					
Fiscal Effect					
State: ■ No State Fiscal Effect				•	
Check columns below only if bill makes a direct appropriation or affects a sum sufficient appropriation.				☐ Increase Costs - May be possible to Absorb Within Agency's Budget ☐ Yes ☐ No	
☐ Increase Existing Appropriation ☐ Increase Existing Revenues ☐ Decrease Existing Appropriation ☐ Decrease Existing Revenues				☐ Decrease Co	osts
Create New Appropriation					
Local: ■ No local government costs 1. ☐ Increase Costs ☐ Permissive ☐ Mandatory 2. ☐ Decrease Costs	3. 🗆 Incre	ease Revenues ermissive rease Revenue	☐ Mandatory	☐ Towns ☐ Counties	ocal Governmental Units Affected: Villages
☐ Permissive ☐ Mandatory	□Р	ermissive	☐ Mandatory	☐ School Distric	
				h. 20 Appropriations vg), 2(vm)	
☐ GPR ☐ FED ☐ PRO ☐F Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal E		LI 3EG-3	320.403 2	(vg), 2(viii)	
This proposed administrative rule will repeal and recreate VA 2.01 the emergency grant program (health care aid and subsistence aid grant program) to establish a new assistance to needy veterans program for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The emergency rule establishes the application procedure, verification requirements, applicable definitions and eligibility criteria for spouses and dependents. The administrative rule has no fiscal effect. It does include the following provisions governing the grant program: 1. Establishes the maximum grant for hearing aids at \$1,500 per ear. 2. Adds language that requires a loss of income due to illness, injury or income available to qualify for a Subsistence Aid Grant. 3. Requires that the department, by rule, establish a household income limit for these grants. 4. Restores eligibility for unremarried spouses and dependent children under 26 who meet the income qualifications for the program and are residents of the state if their spouse or guardian died while on active duty. 5. Specifies that the spouse or dependent children of active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard activated or deployed to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible for economic assistance if they meet the following: a. Are a resident of Wisconsin b. They have suffered an economic loss c. They experience an economic emergency during the period of activation or deployment. 6. Adds language that allows the department to promulgate emergency rules without a finding of emergency. 7. Allows for the use of the 14-day passive review process to obtain budget supplements. Funding for this grant program was provided under the provisions of 2005 Wisconsin Act 25. Funding is provided at the level of \$822,000 in FY06 and in FY07.					
Long-Range Fiscal Implications					
Agency/Prepared by: (Name & Phone No Zolonda Eubanks Dept. of Veterans Affairs	p.)	Authoriz	ed Signature/Telep	phone No.	Date 7/28/05

ORDER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ADOPTING RULES

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs hereby adopts an order to repeal and recreate VA 2.01, relating to the assistance to needy veterans program.

ANALYSIS PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Statutory authority: ss. 45.03 (2) and 45.40 (3m), Stats.

Statute interpreted: s. 45.40, Stats.

The repeal and recreation of VA 2.01 will implement the legislature's and governor's initiative to establish a new program for assistance to needy veterans in 2005 Wisconsin Act 25. The new program replaces the former economic assistance grant program. The statutory citations have also been changed as a result of the enactment of 2005 Wisconsin Act 22.

The new assistance to needy veterans program differs from the prior program in several respects. Assistance is limited to veterans, except under specific circumstances for unremarried surviving spouses and dependents of service members who die in the line of duty and spouses and dependents of deployed service members. The health care aid component is limited to dental care, dentures, hearing care, and vision care. Statutory payment limitations are imposed for each type of care. The subsistence aid component will generally be subject to a strict income limitation, except for the eligible spouses and dependents of deployed members. Finally, assistance payments to an individual veteran are limited to a statutory cumulative amount of \$5,000.

There is no current or pending federal regulation that addresses this initiative. There are no similar rules in adjacent states. This rule has no regulatory aspect to it, has no effect upon small businesses, nor any significant fiscal impact upon the private sector.

TEXT OF RULE

SECTION 2. VA 2.01 is repealed and recreated to read:

VA 2.01 Assistance to needy veterans program.

- (1) DEFINITIONS. In this section:
 - (a) "Applicant" means an individual who meets the requirements of s.45.40, Stats.
 - (b) "Applicant's family" means the applicant's spouse and dependents or, where the applicant is a dependent, the parents, stepparents, or any custodial guardians of the dependent.
 - (c) "Approved treatment programs" means treatment programs approved by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) or alcohol and other drug treatment programs certified by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.
 - (d) "Available liquid assets" means cash on hand, including cash in checking, savings, money market or similar accounts, cash value of life insurance policies, liquid investments, including stocks and bonds and amounts deposited in any retirement plans, owned, either jointly or solely, by the applicant or the applicant's family.
 - (e) "Declaration of aid" means a written determination regarding the availability of county, state, or federal aid administered by the county for an applicant. A declaration of aid must be signed by a county official authorized to determine whether aid is available for an applicant and the applicant's family and whether the applicant has accepted the aid available.
 - (f) "Dental care" means any care given to teeth, the supporting natural and artificial structures for teeth, and any replacement or restoration of teeth.
 - (g) "Denture" means a dental device that replaces one or more teeth and includes all dental preparation and the manufacture and fitting of the device.
 - (h) "Department" means the Wisconsin department of veterans affairs.
 - (i) "Description of benefits" means a written determination that an applicant is eligible for health care aid or subsistence aid or both. A description of benefits expires 90 days after the date of eligibility is established and printed by the department unless extended by the department.

- (j) "Earned income" means all anticipated family monthly take home earnings from employment including armed forces reserve and national guard pay, and work study payments, after all payroll deductions of the applicant and the applicant's family except payroll deductions for savings plans and payment of debts.
- (k) "Economic emergency" means a natural disaster which damages an applicant's primary living residence, a medical emergency, the failure of the applicant's sole means of transportation, or a severe disruption in essential household systems caused by a failure of the applicant's stove, refrigerator, heating system, ventilating and air conditioning system, plumbing system, or electrical system such that it materially compromises the applicant's ability to live.
- (1) "Health care" means dental care, dentures, hearing care, and vision care.
- (m) "Health care aid" means the payment by the department for health care.
- (n) "Hearing care" means any care related to hearing, including, but not limited to, hearing exams or hearing aids.
- (o) "Illness or injury" means a physical or mental health problem that has been diagnosed by a licensed physician, dentist, optometrist, or audiologist.
- (p) "Month" means any consecutive 30-calendar day period.
- (q) "Natural disaster" means a catastrophic occurrence over which the applicant or family members living with the applicant has no control, including, but not limited to, a fire, flood, tornado, blizzard, or earthquake.
- (r) "Subsistence" means essential living expenses including current rent or mortgage payments on the applicant's primary residence, food, current medical insurance premiums, current costs for prescribed medications, essential travel, child care required because of employment, educational or medical reasons, and current costs for electricity, heat, and basic telephone service for the applicant's primary residence. Subsistence also means any repairs or purchases required due to an economic emergency.
- (s) "Subsistence aid" means the payment by the department for subsistence.
- (t) "Unearned income" means the estimated amount the applicant and the applicant's family receives in benefits or grants during any month from the USDVA or other federal agencies, scholarships, fellowships, grants, tuition and fee waivers, all other definite awards other than loans, including amounts paid to the applicant or the applicant's family or to the school on behalf of the applicant or applicant's family for vocational rehabilitation by the USDVA or any other agency, income from trusts or inheritances, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation,

social security payments, net rentals from real estate, interest or dividend income or other income not included under earned income. It shall not include death benefits paid by the USDVA or other federal agencies.

- (2) GRANT APPLICATION. (a) Forms required. A grant application shall be submitted on a department approved form. It may be submitted through a county veterans service officer, through any other department authorized agent, or directly to the department, either manually or electronically. The application shall specify the type of care being requested. A declaration of aid shall be submitted with the application. The declaration shall state that the applicant has applied for all aid offered through or administered by the county, including aid from the federal or state government. If requested by the department the applicant shall submit evidence establishing that all other available aid has been applied for and accepted. The department may request additional verification of any information provided in the application. The department shall notify the applicant or applicant's county veterans service officer if any required documentation is missing or if further verification is required to make a decision on the applicant's eligibility. The department shall terminate an application if such documentation or verification does not arrive at the department's central office within 30 days of that notification. Note: Application and declaration of aid forms may be obtained at the Department's web site at http//dva.state.wi.us.
- (b) Eligibility. 1. 'All applicants.' Except for applicants who are eligible under subd. (3), the applicant's income shall not exceed 130% of the federal poverty guidelines, in effect on the date the application arrives at the department's central office, for the number of family members living in the primary residence. An applicant may apply for subsistence aid, health care aid, or both. Applications approved by the department shall have the balance of the maximum available aid allocated towards each type of aid requested, unless the applicant indicates a lesser amount in writing. Applications shall be denied if no unallocated funds are available at the time of application. The department shall indicate on each description of benefits the type of health care or subsistence aid authorized, the date the department confirmed that the applicant was eligible for the grant, a date 90 calendar days from that date, the unallocated amount available for each type of aid and for the cumulative limits of this section, and the amount of aid being authorized. Authorized applications for health care aid may not be withdrawn without the agreement of the provider of the health care aid.
- 2. 'Unremarried surviving spouses and dependents of veterans who die in the line of duty.' Unremarried surviving spouses and dependents claiming eligibility due to the death of a veteran in the line of duty shall submit evidence from the appropriate military service indicating that the veteran died in the line of duty.
- 3. 'Spouses and dependents of activated or deployed members.' Spouses and dependents of a member of the U.S. armed forces or of the Wisconsin National Guard claiming eligibility shall submit evidence that the service member has been deployed or

activated, that due to the activation or deployment a loss of income has occurred, that an economic emergency has occurred during the activation or deployment, and that the spouse and dependents are residents of the state.

- (3) LIMITATIONS. (a) Health care aid. A health care provider may provide health care within 90 days after the department confirms that the applicant is eligible only after a description of benefits has been transmitted to the applicant or the county veterans service officer. The department may accept a second application for the health care listed on the first description of benefits if the department receives a statement from the health care provider, within 7 calendar days before the expiration listed on the first description of benefits, that the health care authorized is still being provided and that the patient will not incur costs.
- (b) Subsistence aid. Subsistence aid may be granted for a thirty-day period if an applicant presents evidence of a loss of income due to illness, injury, or a natural disaster. Subsistence aid may also be granted for a 3-month period if the applicant presents evidence that incapacitation will last for 3 or more months. Subsistence aid shall be limited to the difference between the amount of earned and unearned income available before the loss of income and the earned and unearned income being received after the loss of income, subject to the limitations under s.45.40 (1) (b) and (3), Stats. The applicant shall verify the loss of income by submitting verification of income forms, certified public accounting statements or any other evidence as the department deems credible. Illness or injury must be verified in writing on a form approved by the department. When the department has evidence that the incapacitation will cause an income loss for 3 months or longer, subsistence grants will be prorated for each of the 3 months unless the department determines that an alternate distribution of the grant would benefit the applicant. If the loss of income is the result of alcohol or other drug abuse, the applicant shall verify current participation in an approved treatment program.
- (c) Restrictions. Aid granted for subsistence or health care under s.45.40, Stats., is subject to a \$5,000 cumulative total based on the aid granted to a veteran and his or her spouse and dependents. The maximum amount of aid payable in a consecutive 12-month period is \$2,500 for dental care, \$1,500 per ear for hearing care, and \$500 for vision care. The department may provide a grant only if the provider accepts the grant, available health insurance, third party payments on behalf of the applicant and any department-approved payment from the veteran as payment in full. The department may approve a payment by the veteran when a provider refuses to accept the maximum grant available to the veteran as payment in full if the veteran has sufficient available liquid assets to contribute an amount that will induce the provider to accept the aggregate payment as payment in full.

This rule shall take effect on the first day of the month following publication in the Wisconsin administrative register date as provided in s. 227.22 (2) (intro.), Stats.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, October 21, 2005.

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

JOHN A. SCOCOS, SECRETARY